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THE CYNICS.*

"Other dogs," once said Diogenes, punning upon the designation of his School, "bite their enemies: I bite my friends for their salivation"; and it may be confidently affirmed that he and his friends were admirably fitted for the friendly office. Gifted with impressive intellectual force, with unbounded capacity of contempt, and with a pungent humor, they did not know how to spare either men or institutions. The retort of Diogenes to his fellow citizens of Sinope is typical. He was told that they had condemned him to banishment. "And I," was the rejoinder, "condemn them—to live in Sinope." The attitude of Diogenes to the men of Sinope was the attitude of the Cynic school to society at large. Like most ascetic systems it had its roots, in part at least, in revolt against the world. Nothing pleased them. With a trenchant dichotomy that reminds one of Carlyle, they divided mankind into the handful of wise men and innumerable fools. "Of what am I guilty," once exclaimed Antisthenes, "that I should be praised?" And the words came well from one to whom popularity was but "the babble of madmen." Even the most cherished ideas of the Athenian served only to point corrosive retort. Was it civic patriotism? "Why should I be proud of belonging to the soil of Attica with the worms and the slugs?" Was it the warlike spirit—that spirit that Plato, even in his idealized Greek state, weds so closely to philosophy? "Let a man apply himself to philosophy till he has come to regard the leaders of armies as the drivers of asses." Was it popular election? (The Athenians, it will be remembered, were so democratic that they elected even their generals). "They might as well nominate their asses to be horses." So all along the line. Political institutions, property, the family, luxury in all modes, culture at least in many aspects—all serve but as targets for Cynic projectiles. Even the Athenian attachment to ceremonial religion—so singularly tenacious despite all the free thought of the Sophistic era—finds short

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shrift in the blunt declaration that a temple is no holier than any other place.

It might seem that views like these have at any rate the merit of being unambiguous. And it would not do to accuse the Cynics of saying anything they did not think, or of thinking anything they did not say. Yet for this very reason there is possibility of misconception. This in two directions. For (1) we must not take these Cynic utterances too solemnly. The Cynics were philosophers; but they were also satirists and humorists. Like all the masters of vituperation, they had a zest in the commination service. And this being so, it would betray a lack of humor to read all these flings, flouts, sneers, sarcasms, as if they were meant for philosophic formulæ. Once, it appears, Diogenes was shown some ingenious kind of dial; "Not a bad contrivance," was the rejoinder, "to avoid missing one's meals." We make take this seriously if we like. But it may be safer to put it alongside of Antisthenes' asseveration (wrung from him possibly in some moment of exasperation with dilettantism) that "awise man will not learn to read so as not to be troubled by trifles." One must beware of the pedantic literalism of the men who cannot laugh.

(2) There is, however, a second possible misinterpretation. The Cynics, it must be already evident, were men of extreme opinions and unbridled speech. That element of "measure," "proportion," "symmetry," so dear to the Greeks, to them was wanting. And as they had the virtue of living up to their doctrines, it was equally wanting in their eccentric and sometimes indecent lives. Hence the temptation to dismiss Cynicism as a travesty of philosophy, and the Cynics as no better (if one may borrow the phrase) than spiritual clowns.

For two reasons any such misinterpretation would be grossly unjust. (a) One that the Cynic revolt against society was far from unprovoked. In our gratitude for what Greece has done for us (and what has it not done for us?), we must not forget that even the Greece of Pericles had its blots. It was devastated by constant wars, and it could be ruthless in its manner of waging them. It was split up into little municipal states which hated each other with a perfect hatred, as Athens hated Thebes

or Sparta, or as Thebes hated Athens. It was built upon slavery—the horrible slavery of the mines as well as the milder bondage of the household; and it grew into slavery rather than out of it. Beautiful in so much, even as its own Parthenon, Greek civilization could as little assimilate this servile substratum as could the Parthenon transmute into frieze and columns the native rock of the Acropolis. And then these little States were torn by those intestine rivalries, and cursed by those unscrupulous ambitions which led to the political inferno described in lurid pages by Thucydides. Add to this the perennial vices that may only too surely be reckoned upon where wealth has grown, and luxury increased, and command of leisure and facilities for culture borne their usual harvest of dilettantism. Who will say that such a society did not need its censors and satirists? There was a word of advice once given by Diogenes. It may be commended to all those, whether individuals or nations, who wince under the lash of their critics: “Associate with your enemies: they will be the first to tell you of your faults.” (b) The second point—the second consideration which forbids us to take Cynicism too lightly—is that, despite all its extravagances it rested on a principle. Disgust with social life was part of it. But it was not the main part, nor would it ever have been so bitter had it not found inspiration elsewhere in the life, and in the doctrine, of Socrates.

It sometimes happens that a great man, though himself far enough from being sectarian, becomes the founder of sects. He cannot help it. He is so great that his followers, being lesser men, and quite unable to see around him, come to mistake the part for the whole, to fashion their god in their own imperfect image, and to subsist each of them upon his own favorite fragment of the master’s example and teaching. This, at least, was what happened to Socrates. None of the world’s great thinkers has ever gathered into discipleship men of such varied types; and never did philosopher trouble himself less than did this philosophic genius to keep all his utterances formally consistent, or to hand on to successors the doubtful legacy of a dogmatic system. The result followed. When he passed away, it was Plato alone who reproduced him in his splendid many-sided-

ness. For the rest, the varied aspects of truth that had found unity in the Socratic personality fell asunder into fragments, which were portioned out among followers who, as usual, all claimed the true apostolic succession, and all repudiated every succession but their own. Hence arose those schools so fitly called the incomplete Socratics; and among them, arrogant in their incompleteness, the Cynics.

When Antisthenes, the founder of the school, first made the acquaintance of Socrates, he could hardly have appeared a promising disciple. He was already middle-aged, "too old to learn." He was himself already a teacher of philosophy; and who does not know that for a man to have disciples is by no means the surest way to become a disciple himself? Yet Antisthenes was not deterred. We see him, cross-grained and cantankerous though he seems to have been, tramping his five miles from the Peiraeus to meet with Socrates in the Agora, and to learn from his lips the open secrets of a deeper philosophy. And then there was so much in Socrates that came half way to meet his admiration. For Socrates was anything but the typical Greek. He was rugged and plain. His dress was coarse. His manner of life was frugal. He was an admirable campaigner. Hunger and thirst, cold winds and scorching suns, could make no impression on that iron frame. He often went barefoot. And though he could enjoy himself in due season—witness *The Symposium* of Plato—he could also be abstemious to asceticism. Nor was he fastidious in his company. Rich men and poor came much alike to him. And as for his talk, it was not at all of the kind that the Greeks, or most of us since, have been accustomed to hear from philosophers. For it seemed to deal little with the high themes of the schools, with the cosmologies of the early philosophers, or with the abstract science of some of his contemporaries. Has not Zeller even called him "philistine"? In truth, there were men who, when they met him, were shocked to find to what an extent his conversation ran upon smiths, tailors, tanners, saddlers, and such like. And though in this homely talk, in these analogies, thrice-vulgar to Greek ears, there lay in germ nothing less than the idealism of Plato, this did not appear upon the surface.

There were remarks, too, which must have found in Antisthenes a receptive soil. "To need nothing is divine, to need as little as one can is all but divine." It was sayings like this that Antisthenes carried with him to bear their fruit in due season in Cynic life and doctrines. There were, of course, other sides to Socrates—urbanity, zest in the gaiety of life, humorous toleration for human weakness, reverence for the laws of the land, a profound religious spirit. But Antisthenes cared for none of these things. Enough for him that he had found a pattern of austerity, conviction, and rationality.

Yet it was not the character only of Socrates that wrought upon the Cynics. It was also his doctrine.

Socrates was not merely a moral philosopher. Like Plato and Aristotle after him, he was also, and even more, a moral reformer. For his lot was cast in an age of transition. The unsuspecting confidence of the morality of tradition was passing. Not all the forces of reaction, with Aristophanes to head them, could bring it back. Athens had turned that earlier page. The swift brilliant expansion of national greatness that followed the Persian war had brought new problems; and a widened horizon had opened Athenian eyes to the diversity and variability of moral standards. Not least, there was at work the searching solvent of those great thinkers of the Attic illumination—the Sophists. In their hands a rhetorical sensationalism was raising doubts as to the possibility of knowledge of an objective moral order; and a rhetorical egoism in ethics rapidly preparing the way for an identification of right with might, of law with force, of obligation with fear, of justice with a perishable and changing thing of human institution. Can it be wondered at if there were those who feared that before this the very props of moral and political obligation were going, and that an urgent practical need called for a supreme effort of reconstruction. Among these were the great constructive thinkers of Greece.

Two courses lay open. The one was to recognize the organic dependence of morality upon social conditions; and in the light of that, to attack the vast problem of reconstructing society upon a more rational basis. This was the way of Plato and Aristotle. But it was not the way of Socrates. In the eyes of

Socrates—as in the eyes of Mill and Carlyle—the one vital reform was the reform of *individual men*. And the needful specific was of the simplest. It was what has now become the good old way of hoisting scepticism with its own petard, of meeting the critical and sceptical reason by appeal to reason that was critical and not sceptical. This was the way of Socrates. In season, and sometimes out of season, he insisted that morality stood or fell simply with the possibility of bringing men to think, or (to be more precise) of bringing them to clear, well-defined, and sound ideas of what their duties were. As all the world knows, he taught that virtue is knowledge. And though an exact interpretation of the formula is far from easy, the dictum meant (and this is what concerns us) that, if the moral life is to be set upon a sure basis, it must be through the enlightening of the will—the will which, to Socrates, as to the Stoics, to Spinoza, to Kant, meant the reason of the individual.

It was here the Cynics laid hold. One may not say they reproduced their master. It is evident that reason in their eyes had not the same function as in his. There was less of knowledge, less emphasis on definitions. There was more of simple strength of rational personal conviction. But on one point there was entire agreement, on the vital point that, in things moral, it is the spirit that profiteth, or, as Antisthenes has it, that “men are rich and poor not in their establishments, but in their souls.” No philosopher of either the ancient or the modern world, not even Kant, has so insisted that in comparison with the good will all else is as dross.

It was in fact just this which led them to leave their master far behind. In identifying virtue with the enlightened or rational will, Socrates had made virtue inward. But he had never meant that, therefore, virtue was not outward. On the contrary, he had frankly accepted the life of Athens as he found it. He had done his duty as a citizen on the field and in the dicastery. He had submitted himself to the laws, even when they adjudged him to die. And in giving his life to the mission of personally influencing individuals, he had taken it for granted that the men he dealt with were, like himself, living the ordinary civic life of the average Athenian. Not so the Cynics.

Seizing upon the truth that virtue is, in its essence, inward (a state of will or reason), they went on to infer that, therefore, it must not be outward; and in that uncompromising spirit declared that there is no true moral life for man till he has cut himself loose from every tie, every resource, every institution which social life has to offer.

They had a certain justification. "He who hath a wife and children hath given hostages to fortune." Extend the trite aphorism and we have Cynicism in a nutshell. Not wife and children alone, but friends, wealth, reputation, public position, institutions, all things on which men have set their hearts—are they not all "hostages to fortune"? For all ordinary life is at best precarious. It is precarious even by reason of its outward resources, which, whatever security they may bring, do, as a matter of fact, in proportion as they widen the range of interests, offer thereby a larger target to the slings and arrows of misfortune, and stake our happiness upon eventualities beyond our own control. There is but one effectual security. Care for none of these things. Give never a hostage to fortune. Minimize wants even to the vanishing point. Be independent

"Rally the good

In the depth of thyself."

Such is the message of the Cynics. All external goods were in their eyes obstructions, all social interests distractions, all dependence, whether on men or on things, an imperilment, a sacrifice of the soul's self-sufficingness. Like the Stoics when they asserted their freedom in the last abnegation of suicide; like the Christian anchorites when they sought for their own souls in the desert; like the monks when they strove for spirituality of life in the austerities of the cloister; like the begging-friars who raised mendicancy into an article of their faith, so did these Cynics turn their backs upon all the world had to offer, in the conviction that this was the path to moral victory. "He taught me," said Diogenes, of Antisthenes, "what was mine and not mine. Property was not mine. Kith and kin, acquaintances, friends, fame, intimate associates, places of abode, occupation—all these he taught were no concern of mine. What then was

thine? The exercise of my own thoughts. This I might possess unhindered."

This result is even more apparent if we glance from the Cynic doctrine to the Cynic life. The typical figure is of course Diogenes. When he came to Athens, it appears he had a slave who ran away. The owner's consolation was peculiar: "If Manes can do without Diogenes, so, surely, can Diogenes without Manes." This was the keynote of all his long life. It is all a progressive discovery of how many things he can do without, a prolonged process of self-denudation. It went on till his death, which was characteristic. His friends found him one morning lying on the stones of one of those porticos which were his usual sleeping place. They thought him asleep. But he had in truth at last achieved the final minimization of wants.

We can now perhaps understand how the two aspects of Cynicism stand related. There was the revolt against society; there was the conviction inspired by Socrates that the seat of virtue is the rational will. These two joined hands in the lifelong struggle after a moral independence, an individual self-sufficingness, which carried in it an affirmation at once of the supreme moral worth of life, and of the worthlessness of everything that life had to offer.

If we are to do justice to this strange and picturesque philosophy we must not dwell too much upon its externals. Ascetics are never to be judged by the singularity of their austerities; and in this case rags, filth, and indecency must not obscure the fact that Cynicism was the first thorough-going plea for moral freedom which the western world had seen. In this aspect it is in advance even of Plato and Aristotle. For these, though by far the greatest ethical thinkers of the ancient world, have yet their limitations. To both of them, the moral life is still identified with the peculiarly Greek form of civic organization. It is so even in the ideal republic of Plato, which is, after all, no more than the Greek state glorified. Hence that intense civic exclusiveness persistent even in Platonic and Aristotelian ideals, to which the larger unities, national or cosmopolitan, were hardly yet above the horizon. Hence the profoundly aristocratic spirit even of the municipal so-called democracies;

and hence, too, the basal institution of slavery of which the great philosophers were the apologists. These limitations were, in time, to disappear, and it needed other forces besides theory to demolish them. But it is to the credit of the Cynics to have declared, and that while the *polis* was still in full vitality, that the moral life of the individual did not stand and fall with Greek civilization. They were cosmopolitans when as yet the Christian and Stoic cosmopolitanism was a long way off. Nor had they anything of the aristocratic leanings of Plato. Far from it; "philosophers of the proletariat" they were, after their own fashion, men with a mission who were convinced that philosophy had its message to the multitude—the multitude whom Plato declared to be inherently incapable of philosophy. And as they were certainly no respecters of persons, to them the barriers between bond and free, so insurmountable even to Aristotle, were broken down. Nor is it easy to exaggerate the importance to ethical thought of the idea upon which all this indifference to externals rested; the conviction that in all moral estimates it is the good will that is alone significant. It was a doctrine which was peculiarly needed in Greece. For where—as in Athens—private life and public life were so intimately related, and where the individual found free and satisfying expression for himself in political activities, as well as in attainable enjoyment of the best literature and art, there was a risk that the inward life might receive less than its due. Lives that find a quite congenial environment are apt to lack something of spiritual intensity. And though it might be maintained that the antidote was already there in the teaching of Socrates, and the deepening of the moral consciousness which it involved, it may be doubted whether, without Cynic exaggeration of Socratic doctrine, Plato and Aristotle would have laid such impressive stress upon the spirit in which an action is done as the supreme condition of its goodness. It is a lesson that has never been lost. Caught up by the Stoic philosophy, and incarnated in the Stoic life, it became one of the great legacies of ancient thought to modern ethics.

Nor is it to be denied that even the Cynic gospel of self-detachment from social life rests on a truth. We are all in some

sense (to use the Leibnitzian term) monads, self-centred in our being, however manifold our relations to others. Our thoughts, our hopes, our fears, our sorrows, all our experiences, are in a very peculiar sense our own. "It seems to me," says Sir J. F. Stephen, "that we are spirits in prison, able only to make signals to each other, but with a world of things to think and to say which our signals cannot describe at all." Or, as Wordsworth has it—

"Points have we all within ourselves
Where each stands single."

And, indeed, it is something of a common-place that when the world—even our own intimate world—has done its utmost for us, a limit is reached in every grave crisis beyond which we must be ourselves or succumb. It is but a half-truth perhaps. But then it was precisely the strength of the Cynics to belong to that order of one-sided minds without which mankind would never know what whole truths mean.

Mankind, however, and more especially philosophic mankind, are never content to live long upon half-truths. They have an irresistible tendency to pass to the other halves. And it is a striking comment upon this text that when Antisthenes was declaring that he had rather be mad than feel pleasure, Aristippus was maintaining the supreme end of life to be the pleasure of the moment. Hence that line of criticism which sets itself to show that Cynicism does but scant justice to the volume and variety of human life.

This, however, is perhaps beyond our limits. It must suffice at present to point out that, taking these Cynics upon their own ground, the manner of life they praised and practiced was anything but well fitted to compass the end they so strenuously laid to heart.

For, in an evil hour for their own cause, they turned their backs upon speculative philosophy. This was the more perverse in that Socrates had suggested a better way. For though Socrates was not himself a speculative philosopher, his ethical teaching had opened the way for a metaphysic. His life-long labor was a search after definitions of our moral concepts and categories; and the pre-supposition of this great effort was the

conviction that these concepts, these definitions, had an objective ground in the nature of things. Hence it came about that his philosophy left as legacy to the speculative genius of Plato the epoch-making problem of finding a metaphysic of morals. Now with Socrates the Cynics went a certain length. To them, as to him, morality spelt reason, and reason meant moral conviction. But then, in their case, this moral conviction, as so often happens with ascetics, lacked "content." How could they pass on to the Socratic task of defining the concrete virtues—justice, temperance, bravery, and the rest—when they were spending all their lives in flinging contempt on those relations of social life in which, and through which, these, and all other virtues, could alone gain "content" and actuality? Add to this that, in their excessive pre-occupation with the moral life, they came to regard speculative philosophy as an intellectual luxury, or, in other words, as but one of the modes of culture which fell under their ban. It fits with this that, in such speculative excursions as they did make—and Antisthenes had enough of the thinker to indulge these up to a point—their results only served to accentuate this divergence from the fruitful Platonic development of Socrates. For Antisthenes was a thorough-going nominalist, and as such stood committed to the anti-Platonic doctrine that all general concepts, be they of the virtues or of things in nature, are no more than general terms without objective counterparts or confirmatory realities in the nature of things. This blocked for him effectually the path that led Plato, in *his* development of Socratic teaching, to his metaphysical doctrine of a cosmos of "ideas" in which all general concepts, whether ethical or scientific, find their objective ground. Small wonder then if Antisthenes disparaged speculative thought when thus, in his eyes, it had become barren.

It is not our present concern to examine the value of this nominalistic doctrine. Our object is simply to point out that, in the interests of Cynic morality, nothing could have been more fatal. For, by this disparagement of the speculative life, the Cynics robbed themselves of what has ever been, and still is, one of the most effective of all pleas for the life of self-detachment from the world. Surely if man be ever justified in

sitting loose to the life of institutions and the duties of citizenship, it is when he is possessed by a passion for scientific investigation or speculative truth. Not all the triflings of dilettantism can obscure the fact that a passion of this kind, if it be sincere, exacts an undivided allegiance. It is not simply that life is too short for any one to do great things both in theory and practice. It is that the whole speculative and scientific attitude of mind is fundamentally diverse from that of the restless and crowded life of affairs. Plato saw this. He saw it, although no speculative thinker has ever been sterner than he in exacting social service of the philosopher. For Plato tells us also that, however strenuously the thinker must take the burden of the commonwealth on his shoulders, his heart and mind are really elsewhere, and ever ready to quit politics for that serene pursuit of truth in which his closing years are to be spent. And Aristotle follows Plato. There is no mistaking the sharpness of the antithesis in which he sets the practical and the contemplative life, nor can words be more explicit than those in which, in the tenth book of "The Ethics," he tells us that, in proportion as a man rises to the life of thought, the less does he stand in need of those outward resources, and of that part-partnership in action with his fellow-citizens, without which the *moral* life is impossible. And, indeed, his words here and in the context have actually been pressed (falsely, but not unnaturally) into a plea for the life of retreat from the world. Surely then it was in an evil hour that the Cynics turned away from speculative thought. Even if they lacked the speculative instinct—and no doubt they did—they would still have been wise not to defraud themselves of this strongest of all arguments for detachment from the world. There have been quietists, who have had little to show to the world for years which were filled with communion with their God. There have been thinkers, both in science and philosophy, whose epoch-making speculations have been only possible to men who, like Spinoza, lived remote and secluded. Who will say that theirs were empty lives? Yet this is what the Cynics missed. They abjured, they decried the life of citizenship—and for what?

This leads to a further criticism. For when philosophy or science demands self-dedication to the theoretic life, it is not barren of most practical results. It is of the very essence of it that it brings the finite individual life into conscious relation to a supreme Realty—call it Idea of the Good, Infinite Substance, the Absolute, *Deus sive Natura*—which, in Spinoza's language, can fill the soul entirely. And it is because the individual, otherwise insignificant indeed, can turn to this alike in thought and in feeling, that he can become capable of the strength to lift himself above the shocks and cares and vanities about which those who have not seen the vision disquiet themselves in vain. Such at any rate has been the experience of most of the great prophets of individual independence. It was so with the Stoic sage, strong to defy the world because consciously at one with the reason which moves through all things. It was so with the Reformers and the Puritans, who resisted principalities and powers, not in their own strength, but "by grace." It was so with our own Carlyle, in whose eyes true self-reliance finds its ground, much as it did in his prototypes the Hebrew prophets, in unshaken trust in "the old eternal laws that live for ever." In all there is a gospel of self-sufficingness; and in all it is self-sufficingness through conscious dependence upon some supreme Reality that exists beyond the flux and commotion of human affairs.

From this source of strength the Cynics were cut off. In their struggle after an absolute moral independence, in their narrowly practical concentration upon this, they turned away, with fatal blindness, from the perennial sources of individual strength. So will it ever be with all who follow them in magnifying the moral life to the neglect or disparagement of a religious faith or a speculative philosophy.

Nor, quite apart from this, can one admit that their practical philosophy was the true path to that personal morality for which they were so ready to offer up, on a ruthless altar, all the world could give. One can see this in the later history of the school. With the passing of its great founders, Antisthenes and his disciple Diogenes, its inspiration seems to have left it. For, though the later Cynics kept up the old heroic tradition of

plain living, their plain living gravitated downwards to unredeemed beggary, squalor, and indecency. They still, of course, flattered themselves that they possessed their own souls, but their souls, like those of many a raving anchorite in the desert, or fanatical Stylites on his pillar, could hardly be said to be worth the possessing. It is a well-known epigram of Aristotle that the solitary is either beast or god, and it is to be feared that these later Cynics had little of the god.

One cannot wonder. It was but the Nemesis that is so apt to overtake all votaries of an extreme asceticism which, in a leap after the moral heroic, rashly renounces the homelier ordinary incentives to virtue. Such incentives, be it the love of home and kindred, the affection for friends, the kindness of daily life, the honorable pursuit of wealth, the loyalty to an institution, the stimulus of public spirit, the love of country, these incentives may look commonplace beside the passion for saving souls, the heroic spirit of renunciation, the rupture of all ties, the hating of father and mother for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. Yet it is at our peril that we try to cut out these incentives, and, like the Cynics, cast them from us. For, however, nobly the forlorn hope of morality may still struggle upwards by the way of renunciation, the risk is that the mass of mankind, bereft of the ordinary motives that are the permanent safeguards of morality, may find nothing to check their descent towards the brute.

This is what Aristotle saw with convincing clearness. Aristotle does not denounce the Cynics. In his usual tolerant and inclusive fashion he goes all the way with them in insisting that the moral life must be a thing complete and all-sufficing in itself. He adopts the very watchword of Cynicism, "self-sufficingness" *αὐταρξεία*. But then the Aristotelian self-sufficingness is not of the sort that minimizes wants, and leaves the individual isolated from his kind and stripped of life's resources. On the contrary, it is the self-sufficingness which can only be won by the slow process of self-realization; and which sees in life's resources *not* clogs, *not* distractions, *not* hostages to fortune, but the instruments by whose right use alone human nature can develop its powers. It is all summed

up in a single aphorism: "the state is the limit of self-sufficiency," meaning, that for a full and soul-satisfying life the "social animal," man, needs no less than all that is included in a well organized society. This exactly hits the weakness of Cynic asceticism. So long as ascetics content themselves with railing at the world, they are not likely to fail of occupation. The crux comes when we ask, What next? Denunciation, renunciation, satire, negations however forcible, however witty, are impotent to develop the soul of the man who tries to subsist upon them. There is but one way—the way of Aristotle and of Carlyle—it is by finding one's work and doing it. For without a sphere of action the soul is irretrievably atrophied, and without a sphere adequate at least in some measure to the varied potentialities of man, the best gifts of the soul, which come by acting in the world, not by withdrawing from it in an impotent fancied superiority, will never be possessed. It was the paradox of Cynicism, as it is of many other forms of asceticism, that in a true antinomian fervor it at once magnified the moral life, and in the very act of doing so denied to it on the threshold the elementary conditions of its realization. For the wisdom of Aristotle here points the way not only to a fuller, more many-sided, and more beneficent life than the fanaticism of the "mad Socrates," Diogenes, but to a more than Cynic self-possession and a more than Cynic independence.

Nor it is to be granted that, even in its denunciations, Cynicism made war upon the world in the most effective way. Human nature will endure, and even welcome, satire and commination, especially when humorous. Satire is good reading, and the masters of invective, Juvenal, Swift, Carlyle, are far from unpopular. But there is nothing which so effectually turns the edge of invective as the perception that it is indiscriminating. We feel this about the diatribes of Antisthenes and the rest. They denounced war, but to what purpose, when we feel that they would have equally denounced a filibuster's raid and the civic devotion of Marathon or Salamis? They rose above the narrow exclusiveness of the *polis* and were the first cosmopolitans; but what of that, when we feel sure that they would have risen above the kingdom of heaven could it

have descended four-square upon earth? After all it is a spurious and an easy cosmopolitanism which comes of indifference to the fatherland. The true cosmopolitanism comes by antecedence, not by negation of patriotism. They protested, too, and vehemently enough, against Greek forms of ritual, but one feels that they would have swamped in one common condemnation the most devout achievements of religious art, and the mere antics of superstition. It is so all along the line. It is the easiest function in the world to object, if one has made up his mind to be always in opposition. It is also a *role* doomed to ineffectuality. The Cynics, ancient or modern, who give us no credit for our ordinary virtues, will find us slow to give effect to their diatribes against our extraordinary vices. Their moral purpose may be excellent, "to bite us for our salvation." But it is not reasonable, it is subversive of all just gradations of moral value, and would not cure but kill, were we to don the staff and wallet of Diogenes, and turn this sharp medicine into the daily diet either of individuals or nations.

And yet, when all is said, it would ill befit us to fall in to a Cynic attitude towards Cynicism itself. Rather let us leave it with the reflection that, so long as philosophy has a message for mankind, Cynicism will stand as a memorable reminder that the spirit is more than the flesh, life of more value than its trappings, duty greater than pleasure, and the rational will strong enough to overcome the world.

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